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ABSTRACT

There are a number of ways library educators and librarians cooperate. Some libraries participate in library schools' internship and fieldwork programs, while others allow their organizations to be used as laboratories for special projects, to the benefit of both parties. Library school faculty members are available to nearby libraries as resource people and, in return, invite area librarians to serve as advisors or guest speakers. Cooperation is also possible in making the curriculum of the school relevant to the personnel needs of the locality, as well as in preparing students for the job market and matching student strengths to specific job requirements. Finally, librarians and the library school may cooperate in developing continuing education activities based on the needs of the local librarians. (LS)

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COOPERATION BETWEEN LIBRARY SCHOOLS AND THE PROFESSION

Cooperation is an elusive term broadly defined as working together to the same end. Librarianship has always seemed to resist efforts -- I remember Ralph Ellsworth talking about cooperation and the resistence that many expressed to the idea of a National Union Catalog -- in the late 20's, early 30's. The first reaction almost always is "What Do I Have To Give Up To Get The Benefits Presented In The Venture?" This resistence is true among types of libraries and between practitioners and educators. There is criticism on both sides.

Forces that prevent change include: Loss of Individuality, Autonomy and Territoriality: Plus Tradition. I would like to think that there's not as great a resistence as there once was.

There are a number of ways library educators and professionals now cooperate:

1. Internship/Fieldwork. Although a number of library schools have this option in their curriculum, it has not been offered at Simmons primarily because it has never seemed necessary. The mechanics are horrendous. A large number of our students are working as aides, assistants, etc. part or full-time in libraries while attending school. There is no doubt that in the long run those individuals have a definite advantage often times having tuition paid as well. There should also be an advantage for the library. They are getting individuals with professional orientation at reasonable rates. A few exceptions have been made at Simmons. For instance, in the Phase II Plan, Boston School Desegregation Plan, Simmons has been paired with Jamaica Plain and we have placed a student there for supervised fieldwork. In addition, a number of students qualify for the federally supported work-study programs. We, again, have been able to place those individuals in mutually-advantageous

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positions in all types of libraries. Many of you have taken advantage of this.

2. Laboratory. Using a system, school or public library, as a laboratory for research work by faculty and students. Again a good deal of cooperation could be carried out in this area. Some things have already been done to the mutual benefit of both parties. A good example, is in the school libraries area where Simmons developed the Science Search Systems in conjunction with Groton, Connecticut Public Schools. Some Library Science students wrote Pathfinders. Teachers, media specialists and students in Groton evaluated the guide. The school systems served as a laboratory for testing the library school classwork. Feedback determined which type of Sciences Search System is most effective for school use. Other students have participated in the Model Library Project of Project Intrex at MIT, Massachusetts Heart Association, and Harvard Business School.

In addition, students have, from time to time, been used to conduct special projects for librarians. An example is the Bibliography that one class did on Adolescent Literature for the Massachusetts Eastern Regional Library Group. Another student research project, currently being conducted, is the use of film in fiction, and science fiction. The findings could serve as guides to public librarians in Massachusetts.

Students in Library Programs for Children classes use public and school library groups for storytelling. Some have even developed programs for storytelling. We have had several requests for student volunteers.

3. Faculty as Resource People. Many of the Faculty have, from time to time, given speeches at professional gatherings, acted as consultants on book selection policies; intellectual freedom issues; programs for staffing, resources and facilities, and conducted workshops. This is, I feel, one area of faculty growth and is a consideration in the promotion/tenure process. At the same time, it is time-consuming. Faculty must themselves determine

their priorities. If it is going to require a great deal of preparation, we must recognize the fact that monetary reward is in order. In other words, there is a point between contributing to the community and being taken advantage of.

Perhaps one area, that hasn't been explored fully, is the possibility of joint publications of articles that provide input from both the practical experience of the practicing librarian and the theoretical background of library school faculty. Mutual interests on a number of topics could very easily lead to some interesting projects.

4. Area librarians as advisors in the educational process of the library school. If you look at the number of guest speakers who address classes each year you will know that your contribution is significant -- and appreciated. We also ask area librarians to teach courses. We have had a couple of practicing librarians teaching for us during the past year. We've also been able to use many of your libraries for field trips. Our students have learned a great deal from those visits and have a much better conception of the service or services being emphasized -- from searches of data bases to preservation of materials, to children's services.

5. Student preparation for the job market. You may think this is stretching the cooperation point. But one thing we have done this year is work more closely with the students and with you on placement needs. We have had sessions with students on such things as the how and why of resume writing, applications, the interview process, etc. At the same time, we have worked with you in identifying your needs in the opening you have. In establishing this network we hope we have been able to convey to you how committed we are to you and your needs. We are not trying to place a warm body in a library position but rather by first identifying the strengths of students, then being able to match those strengths to the needs you have expressed. (This is something a

regular placement office cannot do.) Any guidance in this regard is greatly appreciated.

6. Curriculum and continuing education. Our curriculum is a evolutionary process -- just as in all library schools. In a recent self-study, we identified some of the strengths and weaknesses of the program. From that self-study we started a curriculum review that will continue. We have made some minor revisions: Example, dropping one required literature course; adding Organization of Non-Print Materials and Music Librarianship. However, curriculum revision is a slow process and cannot be achieved overnight. One outgrowth of the self-study process is that we have now appointed an Advisory Committee on the curriculum. It is made up of a representative from each type of library. A question most often addressed: What Kind of Program We Should Have -- Generalist? Specialist? We maintain that we must offer a generalist program with a few specialized courses. True specialization must come but that should be in the continuing education process -- both through on-the-job training, through informal continuing education like institutes, workshops, etc., and through formalized continuing education -- formal courses or programs such as the D.A., Advanced Certificate or Ph.D. programs.

Which brings me to the whole area of continuing education and the library schools responsibility-- and this must be a joint responsibility: the individuals the library's, the state library's, the professional organizations, and the university or college. The recent study on continuing education done for the National Commission on Library and Information Science identifies some library schools responsible in:

A. 1. Conducting surveys in regard to the local needs of library personnel.

2. Encouraging faculty to serve as resource persons, leaders and consultants in the areas of specialization.

B. Publicizing continuing education programs being offered.

C. Allowing faculty time for local, regional, state and national continuing education efforts.

D. Appointing faculty members or committees to coordinate continuing education programs.

E. Offering courses on timely subjects.

F. Encouraging interface among all groups.

Most of these we have touched on already. How much further the library school should participate by offering workshops, etc. is now being assessed. There is a Continuing Education Committee which is currently working on programs for the School. Several national and regional surveys of needs act as guides. However, local input is also important.

Perhaps we should establish an annual one day conference where we talk about such problems. Other ways might be an Administrator-in-Residence Program at the School, or scheduled follow-up rap sessions with recent graduates who are now, on-the-job, something we have begun to do this semester. Personal contact is the most important ingredient. It's only through such contact that one gets the feel for concerns, and is truly able to assess needs.

I'm sure I've presented more ideas than time, staff or budgets will permit. The important thing, though, is to get a dialogue going to the mutual benefit of us all.

You may have questions or comments or suggestions that you would like to make. Those are respectfully invited.

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